4
PUMPKIN
SCISSORS
Ryotaro Iwanaga

Pumpkin Scissors

Imperial Army State Section III

by
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North Market Street Graphics

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Noblemen also have families and loved ones!

—Ryotaro Iwanaga

Pumpkin Scissors 4

Ryotaro Iwanaga

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About This Story

The bloody war between the Empire and the Republic of Frost left a deep wound throughout the Empire.

Three years have passed since the cease-fire, now known as the Thin Ice Treaty. The Empire is still plagued with starvation and disease while gangs of former soldiers terrorize the populace. The Empire is now fighting another battle to repair the destruction of war. Imperial Army, State Section III was established as a "propaganda" tool to placate the masses. However, the members of Imperial Army, State Section III, known as "Pumpkin Scissors," are committed to cutting through the thick skin of corruption and crime to bring justice to the people...

Alice

Alice's older sister and the oldest daughter of the Malvin family. Married. She has nerves of steel under her gentle and relaxed demeanor.

Elis

Alice's older sister and the second oldest daughter of the Malvin family. Married. Her dynamic and passionate personality combines well with her sharp intuition. She calls her "ALICE" deeply.

Lionel

Alice's fiancee. He's not a high ranking nobleman but his talent and charisma have made him the toast of high society. He's known as the young "Lion" of the financial world.

Lord Paulo

The economic director of the Empire. A "brutal" arrogant man. A treacherous nobleman who willingly abuses his power. He's misappropriating public funds in secret.

Lieutenant Alice Malvin

Born into nobility, she's a straightforward and kind soul. The 2nd lieutenant for Pumpkin Scissors. She works hard to advance the cause of reconstruction and war relief for the people.

Corporal Olaria

A towering giant he was a scarred up veteran who reenlisted into Section III. During the war, he was one of the invincible Nine Swift members.

Warrant Officer Orelio

An officer in Pumpkin Scissors. He "Stockade Houdini." He comes across as a mellow-tight-hearted guy but he also seems to have a serious side.

Warrant Officer Machs

He seems to be the most sensible of all the Pumpkin Scissors members. Yet, he's friends with Orelio-san, there may be more than meets the eye...

Captain Hunks

The leader of Section III. His razor sharp mind is hidden underneath his leisurely low key exterior.

Sergeant Major Stocchin

A clumsy young girl. She's the paper pusher for Section III. She doesn't resemble a soldier nor does she consider herself to be one.

Mercury

Section III Courier. Private First Class Messenger Dog. He's a lovable mutt with a goofy face. He hasn't been seen recently...

I was sent to my great-grandfather's house to recuperate from illness.
I became acquainted with tales of heroes from all over the world.
Some stories were complex and hard to understand, but
the world of heroes was mesmerizing.
After all,

with a gentle, yet melancholy expression.

We're at the ball, after all. Shall we dance, my princess?
GASP
WHISPER
WHISPER
WHISPER
How dare she!
Well, uh... I'm not familiar with such activities...
No need to fear! I'll teach you.
Bring yourself closer. Good. Just like that.

Episode II Trick in Treat – Performers' Entrance

Ooops.
SMASH

GIGGLE GIGGLE
A noblewoman who doesn't know how to dance! Shameful!
She stepped on his foot!
What!

Please excuse me.

When a bird lands on its branch.
A tree does not complain

I'm honored that you would choose to land on mine, my lovely songbird.
Out of all the toes in this room,

Lionel's such a dreambost ♡

.....

Is he a
Silence!
masochi—

What's on your mind?
Are you thinking about
a man as tall as the sky?
I followed your gaze and realized something.
You're looking above

It's as if you're looking up at someone.
and past me.
This person must be a giant.

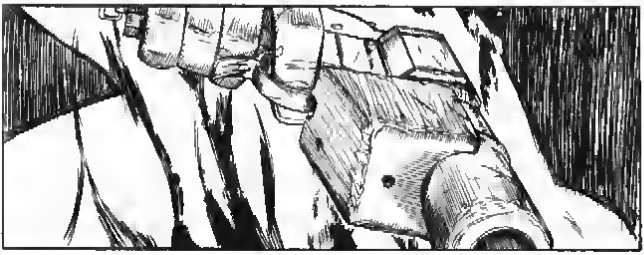
he was a giant.
Yes, I used to think
I thought he was an indestructible man who
would never quit.
The reality is
that he's neither strong nor a giant.
He's...

He...
CLENCH
ギリ…
PANT
ポタッ
DRIP
PANT
PANT
ポタッ
DRIP
PANT
He's—

He's a gentle soul who
should never have to hurt a thing...
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
But...
Moron! Why didn't ya aim better?

Don't let him get away!
RUSH
GUAAAAH
THUD
Why...
HUFF
PUFF
CRICK...

GACKKH
...NZI
!
!!
!!!
!!
!!
!!
!
I just want to help them.
PANT
PANT
Why...



point my gun at them?!
So why am I forced to

You're askin' me why?
PAUSE
Why!
...gh
Soldiers are just like them nobles!
You get to have a comfortable life. We're the last rung on the ladder!
Even my kids understand that they're living off
Screw you!
SWING
of your scraps!

SWISH
PAT
PAT
SKIDDOO
Whaddya know. You're getting your ass whooped!
SMIRK
I was wonderin' where you were slummin'.

.....
Uh...
STOMP
HUUUAH!!
That's a bad idea
STOMP
My martial arts score was
below average, but
THUD

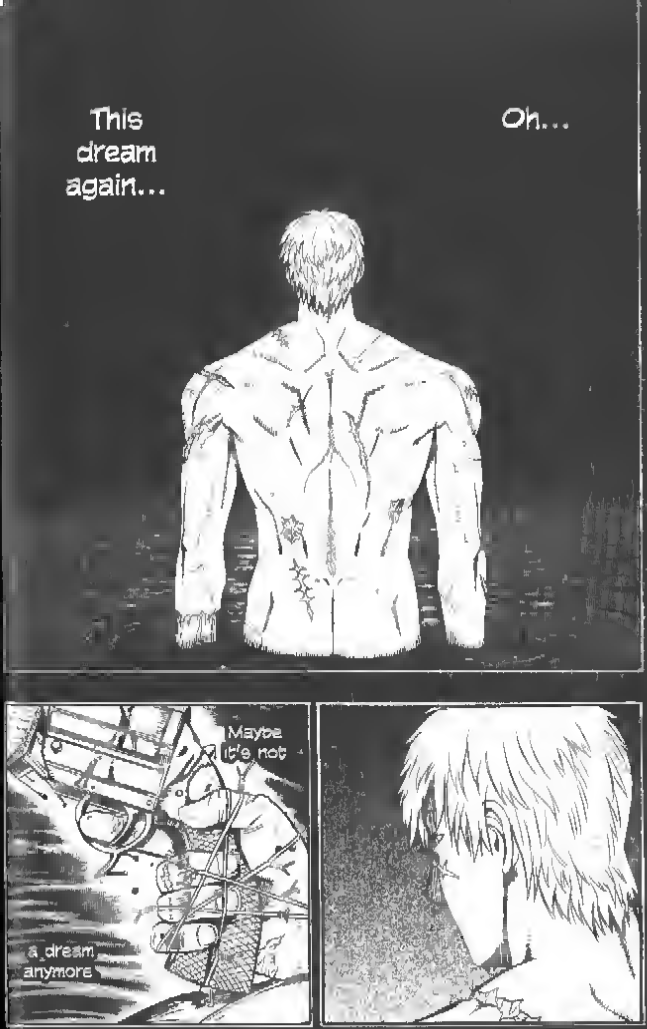
UPHH
SMACK
SLAP!

DASH
I'm not too shabby at brawlin'.

I've always won.
That means I've never lost!

TWITCH
How dare you!
You bas-tard!
TWITCH TWITCH TWITCH
the deadliest weapon in the trenches
According to my boss in Section III,
It was the shovel.
CRUNCH
wasn't a knife or a gun.

Shall we test that theory?
So, what the hell
are these guys up to, big guy?
I should have asked earlier
THROW
TWITCH
TWITCH
Oh crap!
Corpora!


This dream again...
Oh...
Maybe it's not a dream anymore

getting their revenge...
The dead are
so many...
I've killed
GU
GAGG

Soon, the lieutenant will appear and I'll wake up.
It'll be all right!
Lieutenant?

Lieu—
sie....
Lieuten-ant?
Kill
Töten sie
Kill
Töten sie
Kill
Töten sie
Töten sie
Töten sie
Töten sie
Töten sie
Töten sie
Töten sie
Töten sie
NOOOOOOOOOO

We'll take you to the hospital.
C'mon, lay down.
sigh
You need to lay down!

First, we gotta deal with these guys.
CREAK

What's up, Macha?
Hmmm.....
If these numbers are accurate,
this proves that Lord Paulo's embezzling public funds.

This is a smart plan.
They've been sent via various methods, I'm sure.
Including this one, we have 50 copies.
ふーん…

This plan will fail.
SIGH
You don't hafta tell me.

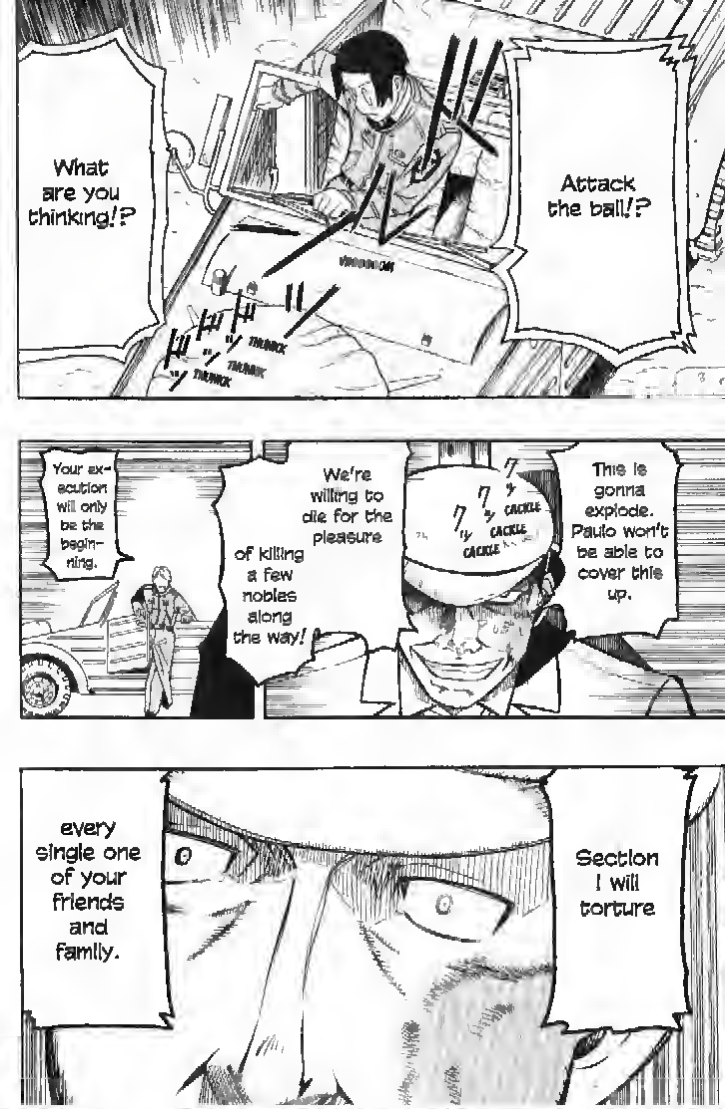
How on Earth did you get your hands on this?
GLANCE

This is a huge scandal.
Section I will take over the investigation!

This is gonna disappear into the shadows
and censor all mail and other modes of communication.
They'll claim that they don't want to cause undue stress to the people

You have some-thing to say?

How long was I knocked out?


What are you thinking!?
Attack the ball!?
VROOM VROOM
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
Your execution will only be the beginning.
We're willing to die for the pleasure of killing a few nobles along the way!
CACKLE
CACKLE
CACKLE
This is gonna explode. Paulo won't be able to cover this up.
every single one of your friends and family.
Section I will torture

This type of leak...
Section I will do anything they can to find out the source.
My family has nothing to do with this!
You think Section I's gonna care?
If a noble sheds a single drop of blood,
Section I will use that as an excuse.
We gotta hurry, Mache!
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
You've got to be kidding.

Get out of the vehicle.
But.
You've got a head injury, fool!
You're not going anywhere!
Besides...
If you die,
murder gets tacked onto their crime.
His family
They're not involved.

SHRIK
SPLASH
Then they didn't
PAT
hurt me. I did.
Kiddo, what you just had.
Gimme
PAT
ハア…

GAAAHHH!
Officer!
You have an open wound. This is the best way for now!
I already disinfected the wound
Shaaaap!
VROOOOM
WHINE
WHOA
WHOA
We don't have any more time to lose!
Corporal! You've wasted time getting a beating, passing out, and whining!
Could you at least stop the car?
START

WHOOOOSH
Are you mad at me?
Nah, I'm not.
I did have a date with one of the volunteers tonight, but oh well.
GYAAAH!

I'm so sorry.
UHUH

You're flattering me.
My princess!
I know he's your subordinate, but I'm a tad jealous that you're thinking of another man.
I shouldn't have vented like I did.

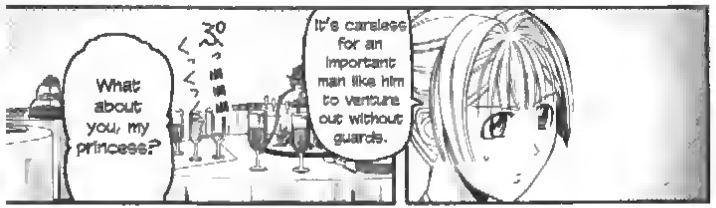
May I escort
you to your bedchamber tonight?
By driving away the competition,
a young lion becomes the king.

There's no tinge of calculation or sarcasm.
Your words are straightforward.
I always found it strange.
.....

RAISE
They were so plain... They didn't reflect who you are.
In fact, your words were so bland.

Those were the most honest words from you tonight, Lionel Taylor.
You desire to win against other males, even those mentioned in conversation!
I did like what you just said!

I'm sorry to arrive so late.
あっはっはっ
Who is he?
The snow was terrible!
あっはっはっ
That's Lord Horst.
His genial and warm personality makes him a popular man
Many have tried to persuade him to take on important political positions.
Pah!

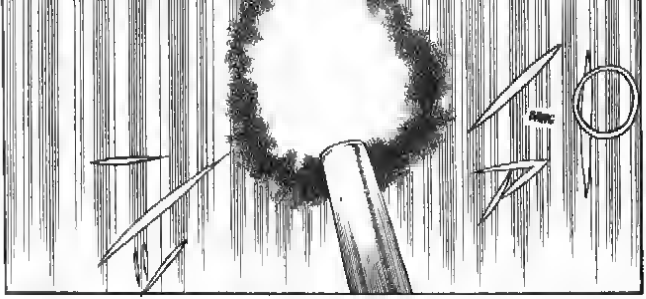

What about you, my princess?
It's careless for an important man like him to venture out without guards.

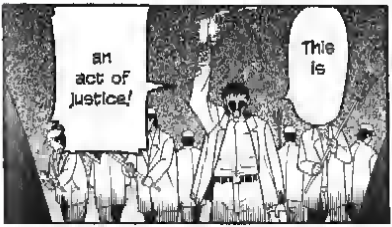
I can protect myself and my sisters.

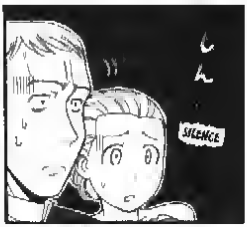
Move away from the window!

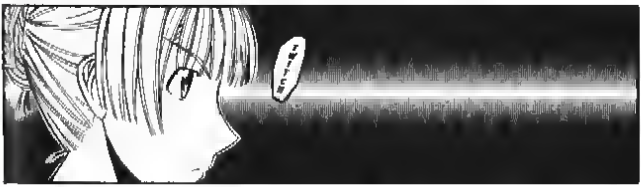
SHATTER
WHOOSH
SLICE
SPLIT
SLUMP

SLAMMM!
AAH!
KYAAAAAIIII
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
Commoners aren't allowed in here!!
Oh no!
Who are they?
KYAA
WAH!


BANG

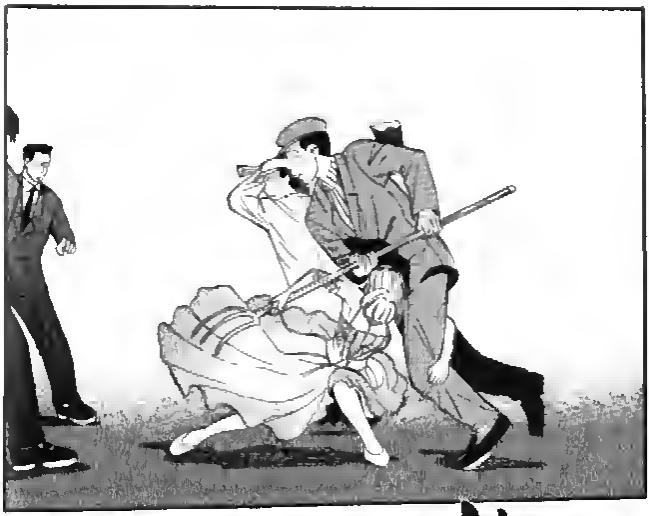

This is
an act of justice!


SILENCE

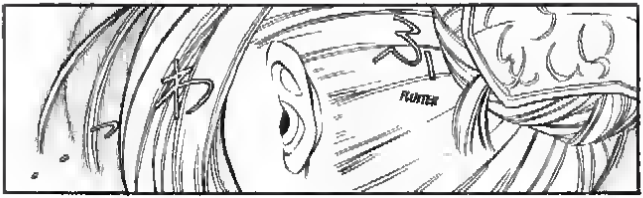

HIS

You'll get what you deserve!
Economic Director Lord Paulo!

Where?
There he is!
DIE!!
CRAB
す…
DASSSHHH!



UNH
ACK!


FLINTER

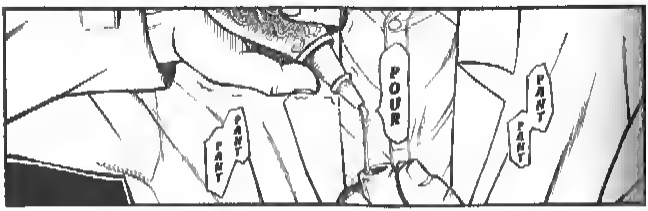
You said this was an act of justice.

SIGH
She fainted!
and threw up then!

What, ill girl?
CLENCH
That piece of crap abused the power of his position
SMACK
and stole a large amount of money!
He did it so he could wallow in obscene luxury!
FLUTTER
FLUTTER
FLUTTER
Here's proof!

It's a lie!
They're just jealous!
Lord Paulo?
We have the right to be jealous, you slime!!
Yet, you waste and treat food like it's nothin'.
Our kids barely get to eat, so they get sick at the drop of a hat.
Most of them end up dead!!

All you greedy nobles deserve to be punished!
It's not just Paulo!


POUR
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT

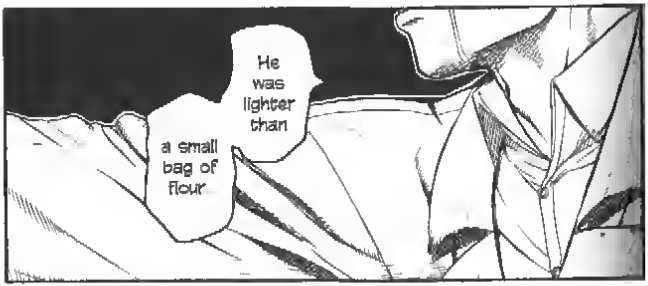
First, we'll deal with you, Paulo!
TWIST
TWIST
CLICK
CLICK

You've consumed more food than
we could eat in our entire lives.
TCHICK

Wait! Don't shoot! Your family
IMGH
may end up paying the price!

I don't have any.

My son died last year of a cold.
He was skin and bones when he died.

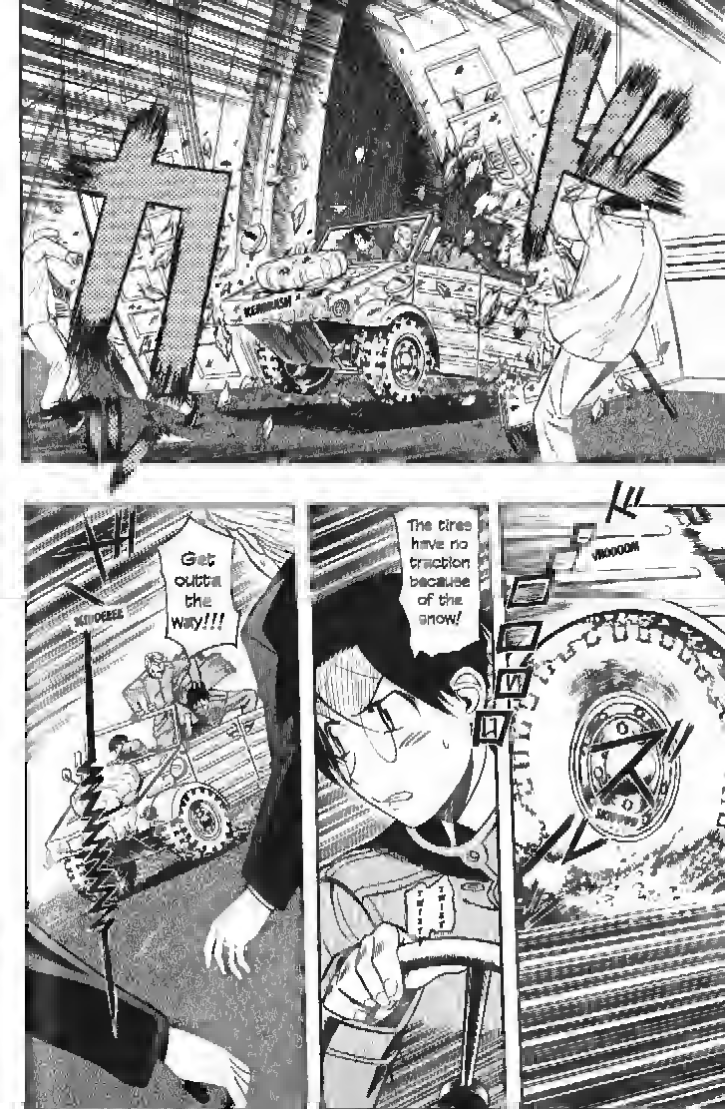

He was lighter than
a small bag of flour.

GRAB

I'm sorry

They want Paulo dead.
Once they kill him, they may turn on us
Elis?
From there, have Lionel help you.
NOW コ ワ ・・・
Solica and I'll protect you until you reach the exit.
Elis!
TUG
you need to enjoy life more as a woman.
It may be unfair, but

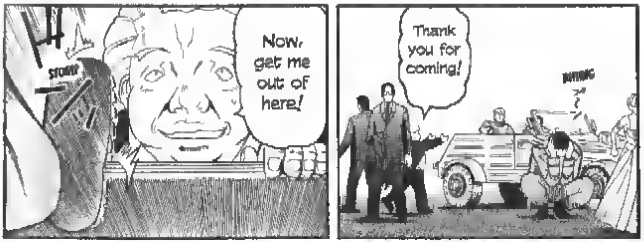
I won't leave.
My decision
is firm.
Alice!
uuoooooooooooooo
Officer! Look out!
Drive on through, Maxine!
No, Webner! I'll kick my ass!
It's heading toward the entrance!
What's that sound?


KRRRRRRSH
SCHOEEE
Get outta the way!!!
The tires have no traction because of the snow!
TWIST
VROOOOM

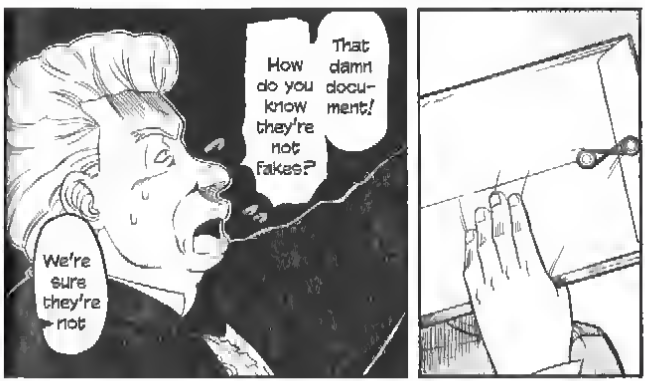
SCREECH
SHRINK
No.
We're fine—
We didn't flatten anyone right?

You look amazing.

What?
Amazing?
There's nothing amazing about this!
Oh!
COUGH
That's just like you, Lieutenant.
My sisters look much better than me.
Yes there is.
SLAP
SLAP
SLAP
SLAP


STORM
Now, get me out of here!
Thank you for coming!
RUMBLE

We're not here to help you.
Just the oppo-site!


That damn docu-ment!
How do you know they're not fakes?
We're sure they're not

There are fifty copies of fifty pages.
Forty-nine of them are "copies."
One of them has the official seal of the economic director
It's not forged.
One page of the original was included in every copy.
As a result, all copies are real and fake at the same time.
According to these,
UGHHH!
last month, you stole seven million

SCRATCH
How can you tell just by looking at that document?
We're managing tremendous amounts of money.
She's bad at simple additions, but she's a whiz when it comes to complex stuff.
Everyone's late!
WHOOSH!
Actually, we have someone who can.
You're from Section III.
DASH!
So...
We can talk about this at our office.

I believe Section III doesn't have the authority to arrest.

You morons!

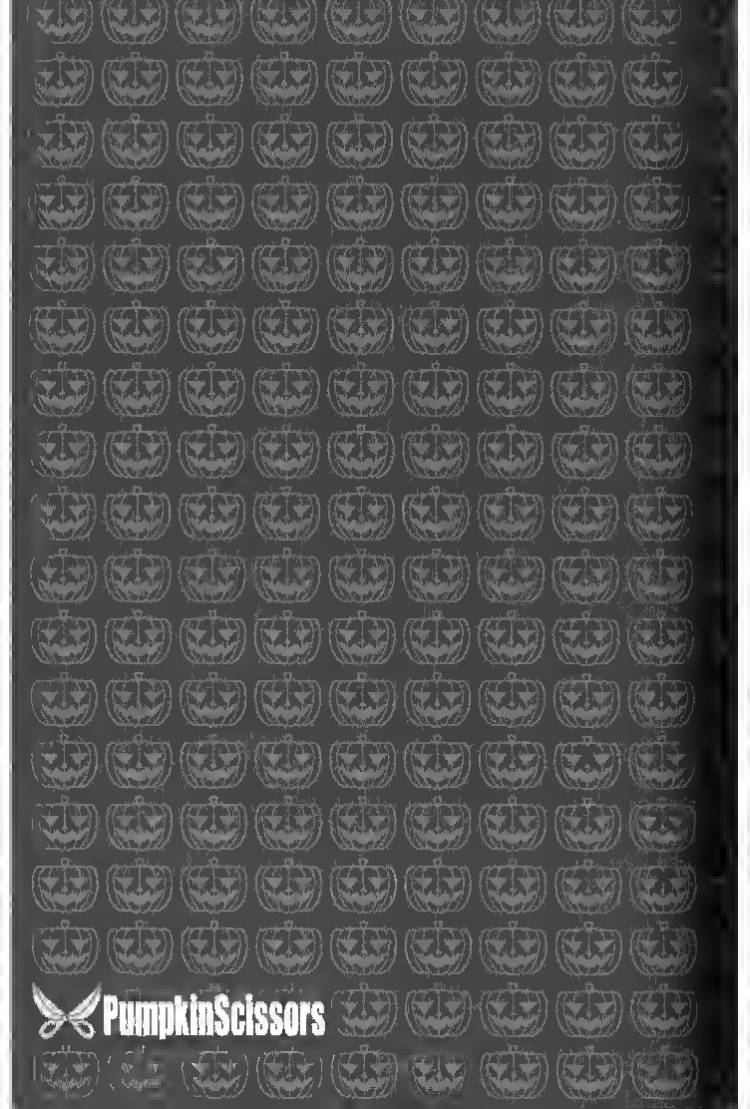
They knew

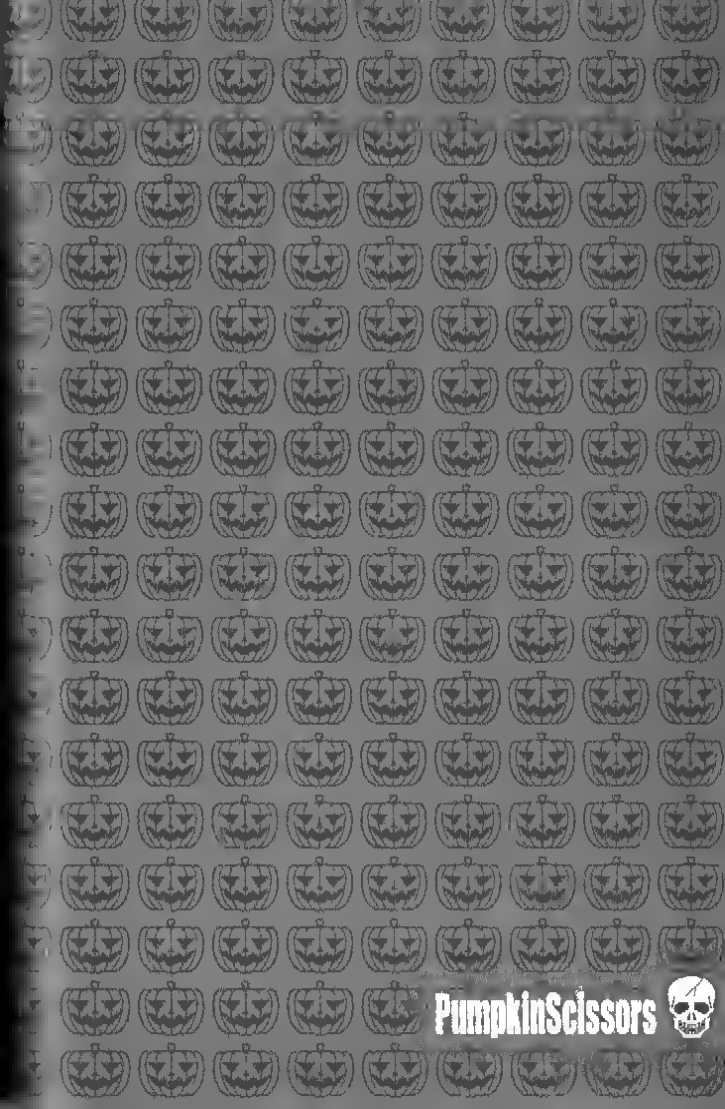
to quell the mob!
We have to arrest him

KYAAH!
Damn soldiers! Stay out of this!
Move!
We'll kill 'em all!
KYAAAH
Yeah!
Anything?
What can we do?
GAAHHH

Silence!
SLAM
A glove?
It's true that we have no power to arrest.
I, Alice L. Malvin, challenge you to a duel.
Lord Paulo...

from one noble to another!
It's a challenge


PumpkinScissors


PumpkinScissors

I think we're done for now!
What...
What should I have done?
They're people we've sworn to protect.
They're not enemy soldiers.

What was I to do!?
SQUEEZE
It happens all the time.
Me, Mache...
We've had to face that multiple times.
Hate, [illegible]...
We admit we never felt the [illegible]ce end of a hammer.

In the chaotic atmosphere inside the cities right after the cease-fire.
Ditto for the lieutenant.
We couldn't expect more than fists and rocks.
Soldiers who ruined their lives are suddenly spouting nonsense about reconstruction
The lieutenant...
What did she do?
How did she handle—

When you're stuck, you call for the lieutenant.
When you stumble, you call for the lieutenant.
Are you planning to do that your entire life?
The lieutenant isn't infallible.
If you're gonna be part of Section III,
then you'd better learn to think for yourself, and think on yer feet.

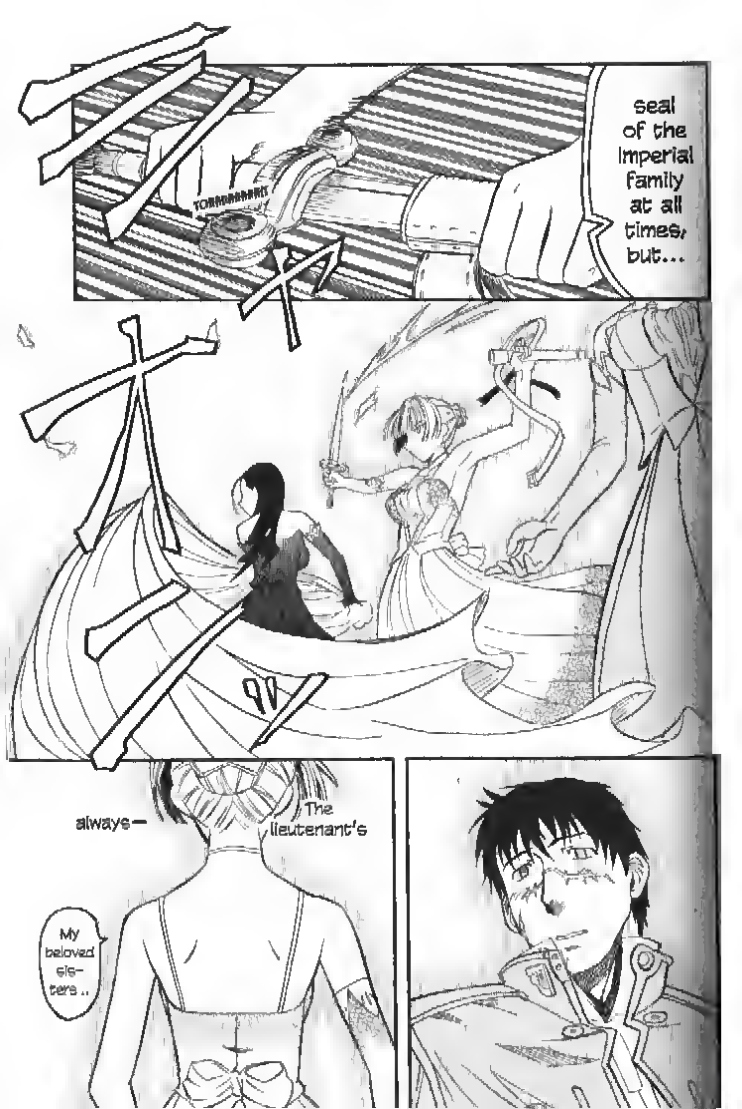
I don't know how...
I don't know what to do.
Kill 'em all!

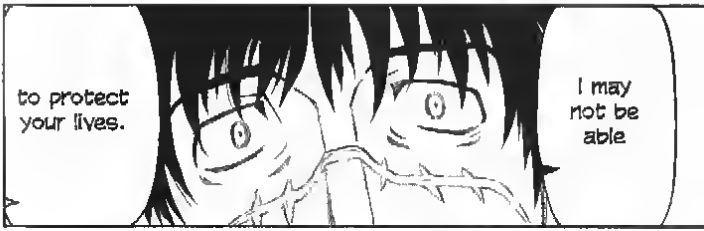
In times of confusion,
the lieutenant always—

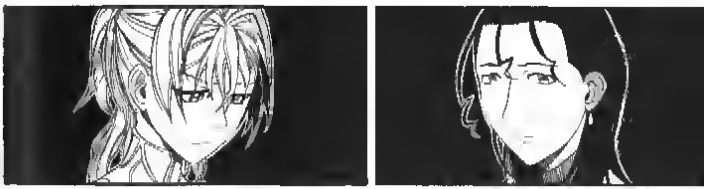
A... duel?
Great! What will be the rules?
Arm wrestling? A game of tag?
ぶわっ
はっ
はっ
はっ
HM HM HM
RAISE
She didn't!
TWITCH
A sword-fight
.....

WHIPPP
THG
I knew it!
DASH
Dammit!
You get to be the wall
WAG
WAG
C'mere! Big guy!
FLUTTER
Wha?
...?

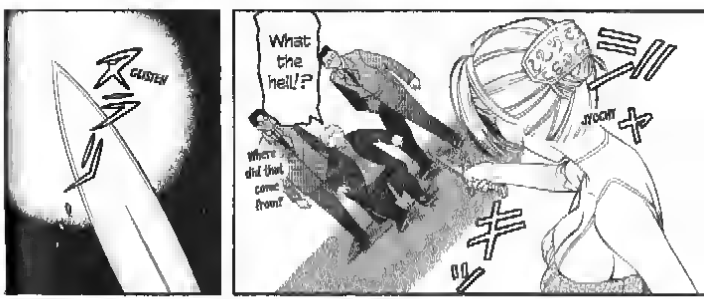
?
FUWA
!
SKIP
KCHK
KCHK
I know we're supposed to wear the
She insisted on bringing the sword.

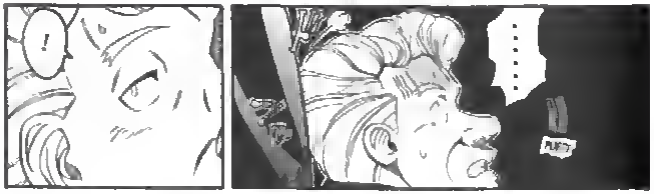

seal of the Imperial family at all times, but...
TORRRRRRRRR!!!
The lieutenant's
always—
My beloved sis-ters..


I may not be able
to protect your lives.

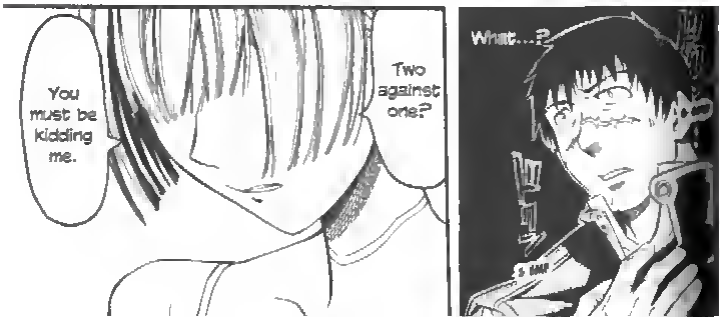


Thank you for waiting, Lord Paulo.
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
What...?
STOMP

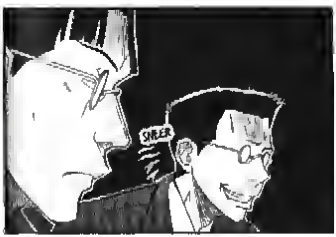

GUSTEN
What the hell!?
Where did that come from?
WOOSH


PUFF!

These two men will be my swords.
CHAO
Fine!


You must be kidding me.
Two against one?
What...?
S SHF

Three against one. Let's go.
You're gonna join in on the fun, my Lord.


SHEER

Why—!?

SLASH
No!

Stop!
What do you mean?
わっ…
FLINCH
I won't let you fight anymore.
Lieutenant!
ぎゅ…
SQUEEZE

SLASH
PUFF
!?
CRACKK
Stand back, Corporal!

I've had enough of this jabberin'
JANGLE
PATTER
How 'bout three against two...
CLANGG
Brass, round spectacles.
I had my suspicions, and I was right.
A flail—!!

You're the Royal Guards of Lodelia!
OH DAMN!
Lodelia? They're an agricultural kingdom, right?
Lodelia's history is rife with peasant uprisings
Their extensive experience with suppressing violent uprisings
has led to their guards being hired as mercenaries to protect VIPs.
GLANCE
If they're professionals, they should have seen what I was trying to do
RIDGET
RIDGET

We're in a bad spot...
I don't know how we're gonna get out of this.
SWISH
DASHH
SHUDDER
with that thing..
If I get hit
SHEER
The table
CRACK

SLUMP
かくん
TREMBLE
SHAKE
TREMBLE
JINGLE
Keep moving.
Corporal!

CRACK
LEAP
!
FAINT
CRACK
FAINT
SLUMP
Why are you avoiding me?
FAINT
FAINT
FAINT
CACKLE

You have the strong voice of a leader
The late king of Lodelia did award you
with the title of Noble Flamme for a reason

That's unlikely...
Is the blade covered in poison?
A machete—!!
Unfortunately,
that title was given to my grandfather.
As the third daughter of the Malvin family
SLIDE
STOMP
a noble.
It is rather barbaric to be called

PUFF
HUFF
PUFF
HUFF
PANT
PANT
he's not going to risk his life.
IF he's a hired hand,
GULP
he'll give up for sure.
IF I point my gun at him,

Uh...
GAAAAA AAAAAAAAH!?
Horses!?
Uh...

CREAK
CREAK
The guests' carriages, eh. That's a problem.
Yo!
I shouldn't make you guys panic...
You think you're hiding over there?
THUMP
THUMP
!
THUMP

CREEK
WOOSH
SLAMM
KUFF

That probably tore up your stomach wall.
JUNGLE
KOF
KOF
GAHH
ACKKK
DRRR
DROP
CLANG

PANT
Drop your weapon!
PANT
KOFF
PANT
PANT
PANT

fear into a crowd
for obvious reasons.
Guns don't effectively drive

A blade or a gun...
The knife's more frightening to feel against your skin, right?
STEP
The pain caused by a gunshot is harder to imagine.
After all, very few people have been shot.
By using weapons that look painful, you keep large crowds in check.
Something that crushes or slices.
The more primitive, the better!
JINGLE
It's gotta sound painful.
JINGLE
The weapon's gotta be painful.
RIP

cowards won't be able to make a move.
JANGLLLLL
After you beat down a few into a bloody pulp,
.....
You're a god-damned coward,
soldier!
JANGLE
TWITCH
SHAKE
SHAKE
TUC
TUC

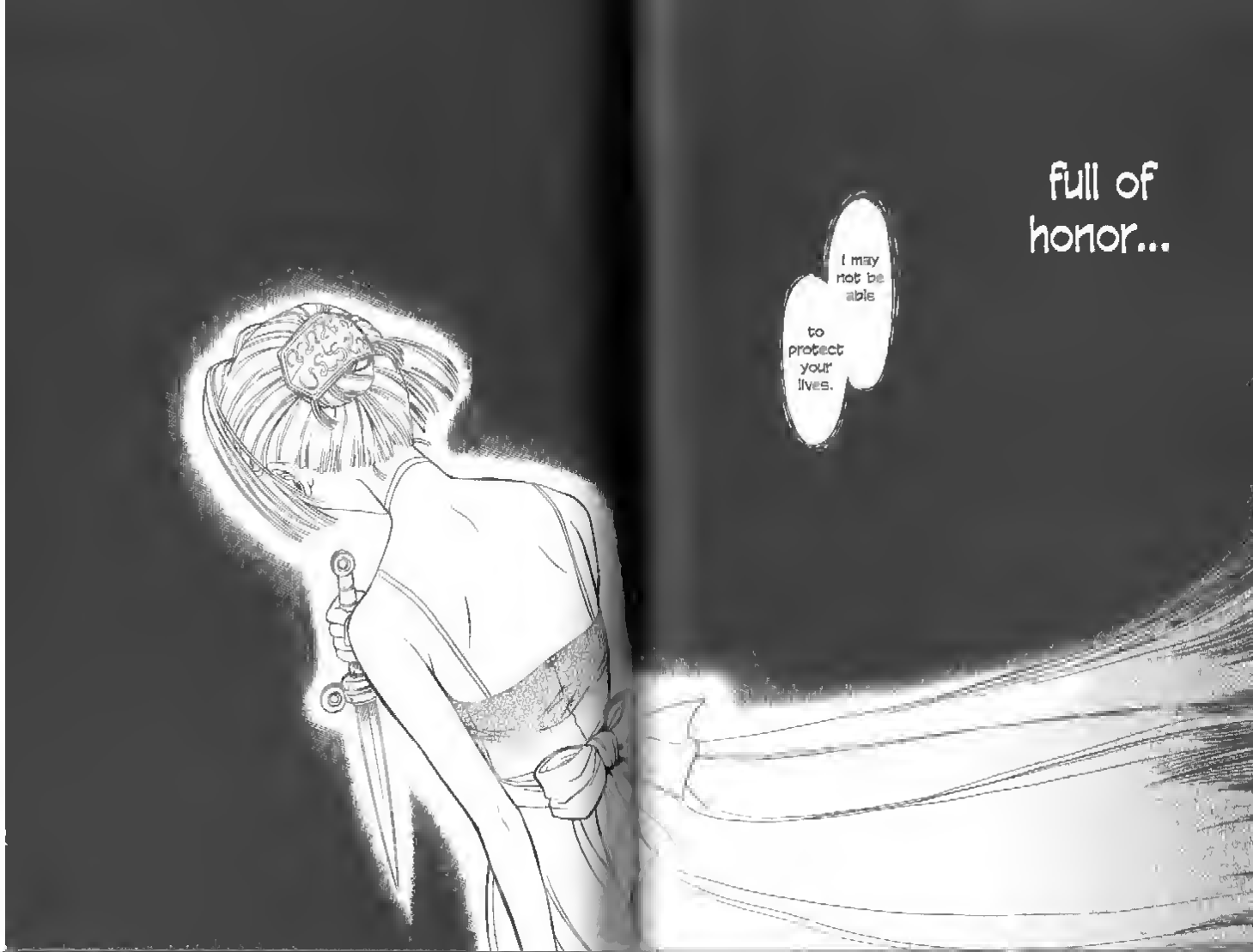
よたよた
PANT
What do I do...?
PANT
PANT
よたよた
PANT
HUFF
KOFF
That sound makes my knees shake...
PANT
PANT
PANT
What can I...
HUFF
HUFF
What's going on?
Why...
Wait...

What are they doing...?

CACKLE
That woman's still alive?
SMASH
HEH
A duel? What a joke.
That little show ain't gonna stop a riot.
THUMP

Slice her up.
She's one of the Thirteen Appointed Families?
The... lieutenant...
No..
DRIP
DRIP
The lieutenant can't be wrong
That should shut the peasants up.
STEP
Swish!

She's nothing like me.
The lieutenant...
So straightforward and true...
She's always so dignified.
always.
The lieutenant's


I may not be able to protect your lives.
full of honor...

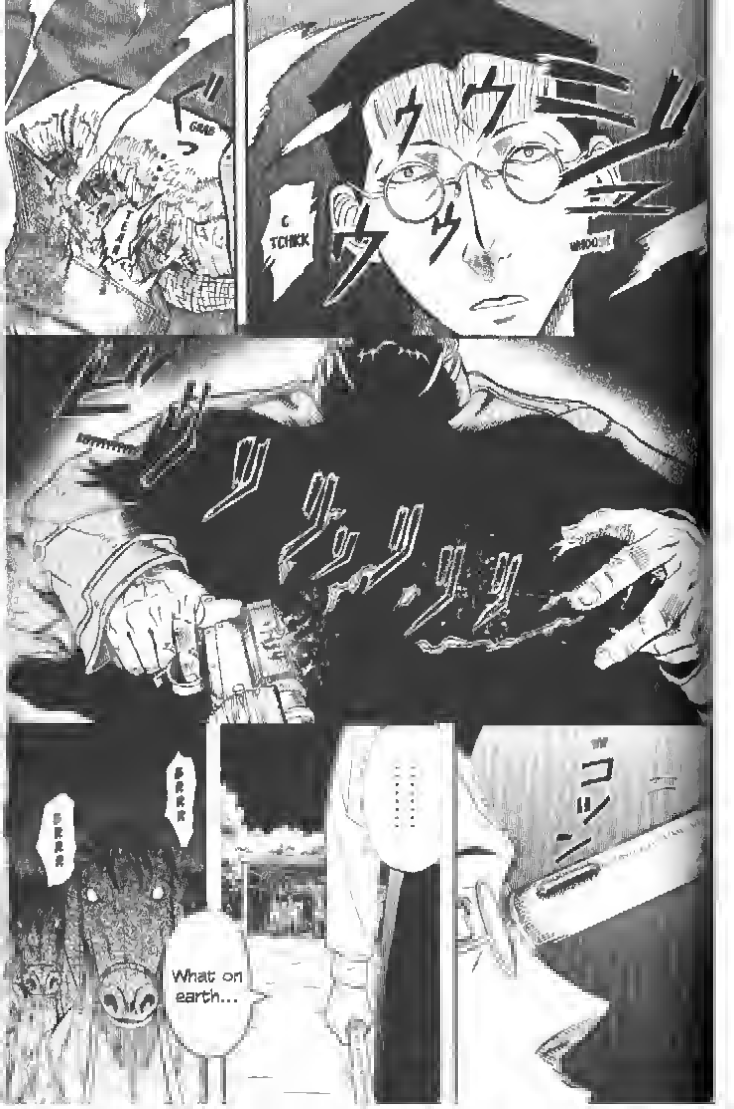
.....!!
SLAM
I'm... stupid!
This huge hunk of flesh
UNIT UNIT
has been leaning against
the lieutenant's small back...

be crushing a woman's soft flesh.
After all, I'd rather
Die already, will ya?
Kill
Toten
sie....
Even if I have to live through this nightmare over and over,
If all I can do is kill, that's fine.
I'm going to protect the lieutenant with everything I have!

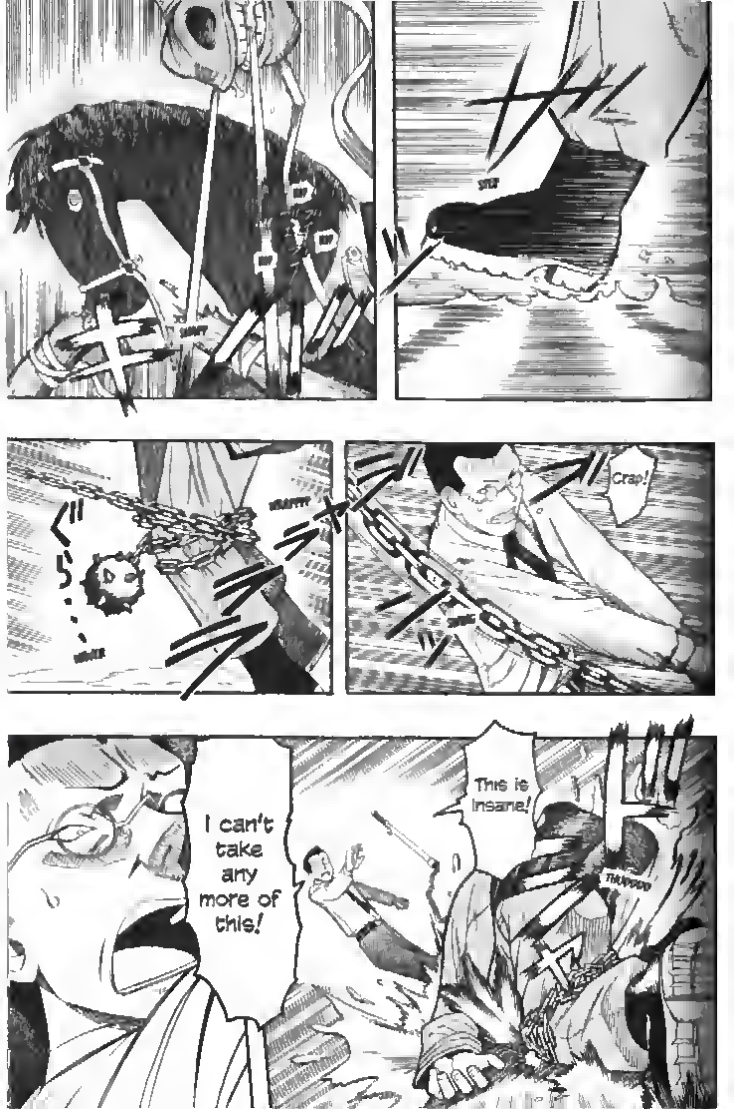
to use this body of mine...
That's the best way

SHIT
scaredy-cat!
Don't try too hard
JANGLE
tap
CLICK
What happened to you all of a sudden!?
What the
CLANG

KAHHH
CLASH
G-TONK
Guns are pretty frightening...
...HA HA HA
HA...
RRRRING
TONK
TONK
TONK
RAISE
I'm
SCARED
SLIDE
SLIDE

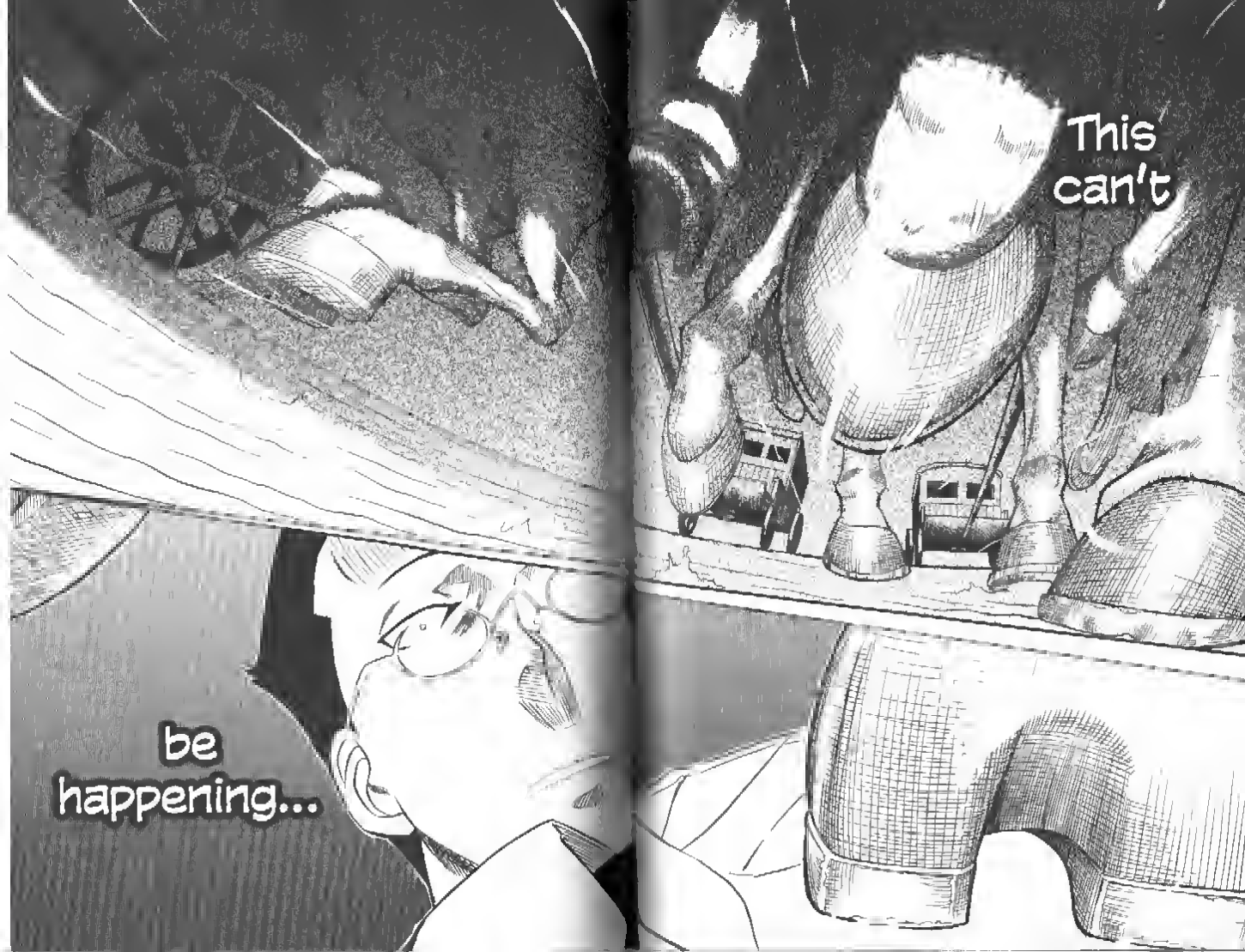

GRAB
CHIKK
WHOOSH
GRRRR
GRRRR
What on earth...

BRRR
BRRRR
BRRR
CLOMP
KTK
CREAK
CREAK
I don't get you...
Who the hell are you!?
SLAMMMM
What the hell's happened to you!
JUST


STEP
CLANK
Crap!
This is insane!
THUNDDD
I can't take any more of this!

TRAMPLE
DASH
!?
TWITCH
TWITCH

The gun-shots
BANG
!!
DASH
Hey...
.....
SLUMP
Stop being
crazy!


This can't
be happening...

DASH
DASH
DASH

Lemme go!
TRAMPLE
TRAMPLE
Lemme go, dammit!
Right now!
TRAMPLE
Let go! Let go!
CRACKLE
You...
TRAMP
TRAMP

DASH
DASH
This is your fault...
DASH
.....
DASH
DASH
It's ruined...
DASH
My right hand...
DASH
DASH
DASH
I can't believe this...
DASH
SOB
SOB
DASH
What am I gonna do now?
DASH

DASH
DASH
DASH
DASH
What... are... you...
!?
DRAG
DRAG
DRAG
DRAG
DASH
DASH
DASH
DASH
DASH
DASH
DASH
DASH
Please!
No!
Stop!
DRAG
DRAG
DRAG
Please stop!

AAAAAA
HHHHHHHHH
DASH!
DASH!
DASH!
ピーピーピー
ピーピーピー

ポタ
DROP
ポタ
DROP
DRIVE
DRIVE
ビク
TWITCH
AH
AGH
TWITCH
ビク

Töten sie
Töten sie
Töten sie
Töten sie
Töten....
Alle!

ナイ
フ

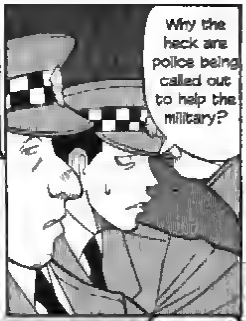
She would never ask for help.
So...
The harder things get, the more she isolates herself.

That's
my job is to cover her back.
as a member of Section !!!!!
my most important role
#12/ THE END

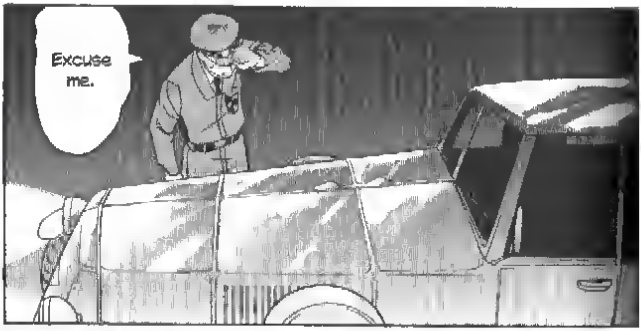
PumpkinScissors

Dammit!

All members are given special authority.
Shhh!
They're called axe-some-thing.


Why the heck are police being called out to help the military?

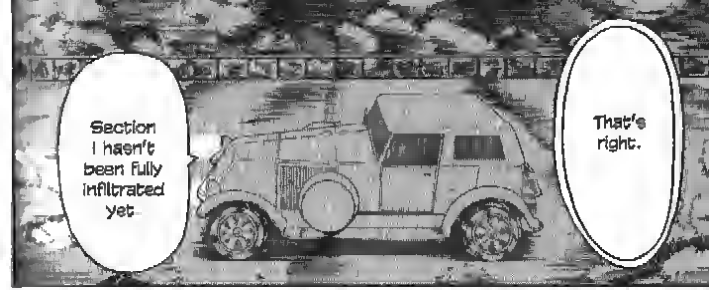
As long as they claim "information control."
That sucks—
they can take men from lower departments and mobilize them under their command.


Excuse me.

Let him pass.

Go ahead.
This area is closed to the public.

Was that high-ranking military personnel?
HAHA
VROOOM
Oh, that car..


That's right.
Section I hasn't been fully infiltrated yet.

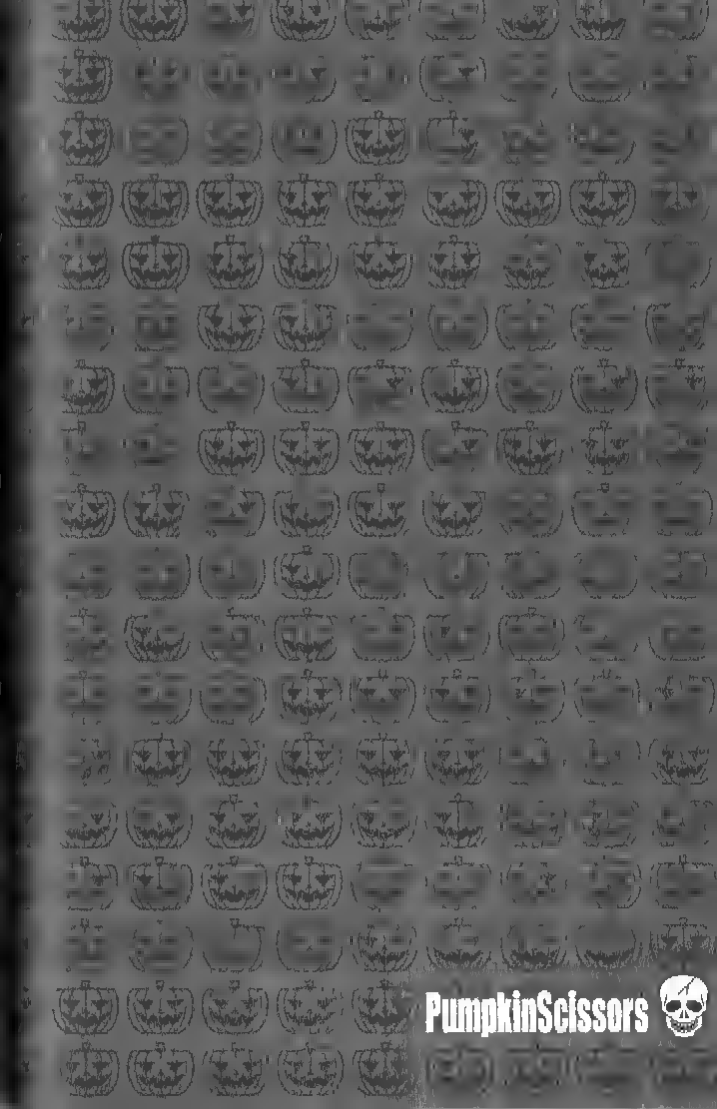
That kid...
He's just enjoying the thrill. I don't think he's taking this seriously.

learn to hunt through
playing with their siblings.

Lion cubs

Lions kill only out of necessity.
As a result, they develop boundaries.
They don't just learn hunting skills. They're basically simulating the taking and killing of life.
never had anyone to "play" with.
However, he
without ever having learned his boundaries.
He's grown up, yet still searching for a playmate

NEXT!

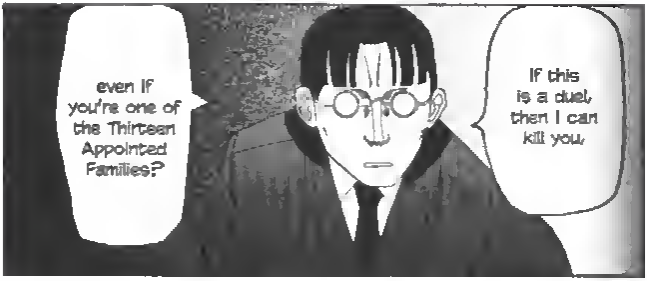

PumpkinScissors

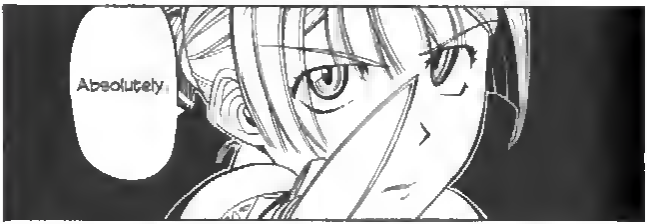
There is something very lonely about...
...being a nobleman.

Keep moving, Corporal!
Noblemen must

protect
their
people
from
external
threats!
In order

to govern people, noblemen must...

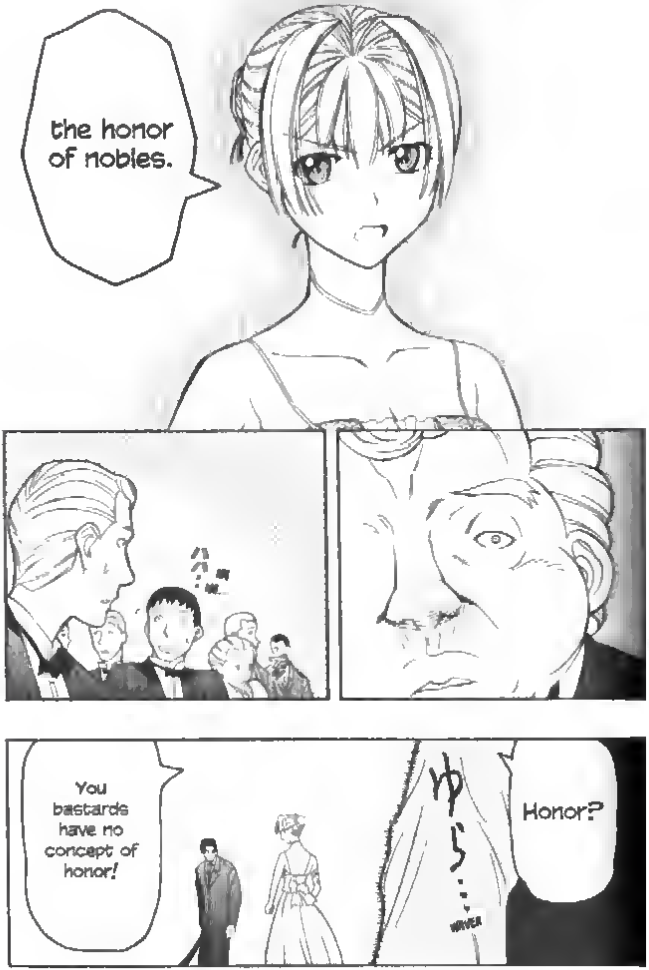

even if you're one of the Thirteen Appointed Families?
If this is a duel, then I can kill you.


Absolutely.

What are you fighting for?

Any other questions?

I'm...
fighting for...

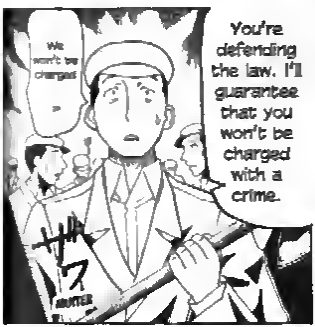

the honor of nobles.
You bastards have no concept of honor!
ゆら…
WAVER
Honor?

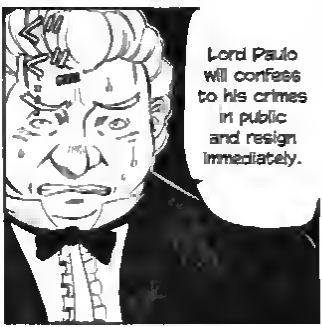
You think that's gonna quell our anger!?
You pretend with this bullcrap of a duel...
No!
Ahh!
Best to take some jerks to the grave with us!
We're gonna be executed for this, anyway!
Can you wait for just a little bit?
It's too late to beg...

What?

He's an aristocrat!?
Lord Paulo's guilty. These documents prove that.
So,

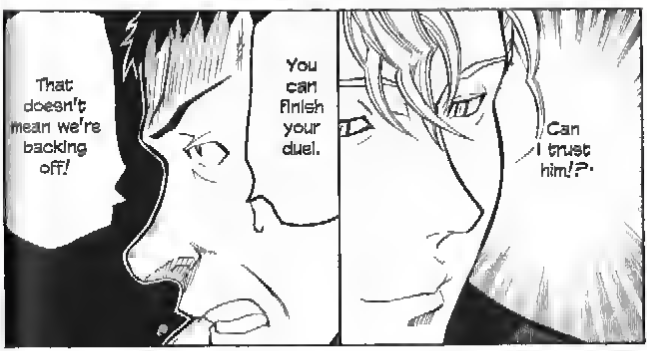
if this woman wins the duel,


We won't be charged
You're defending the law. I'll guarantee that you won't be charged with a crime.

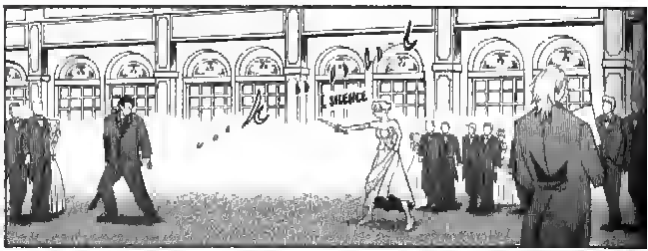

Lord Paulo will confess to his crimes in public and resign immediately.

What if we win?
Lord Paulo can do as he wishes.
He could deny end cover up this incident.
He can attempt to escape this room
There will likely be a bloodbath
In that case, we're back to the original plan
It's not a bad proposition...
It's a win-win offer
What do you think?
SHOOT

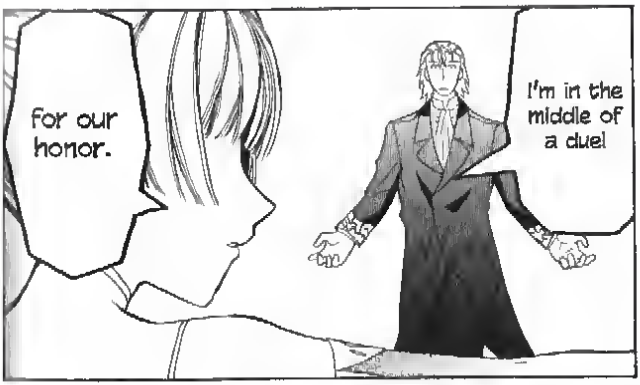
We'll live!!
our lives will be spared, right?
WHISPER WHISPER
WHISPER WHISPER
WHISPER WHISPER
If she wins...
What should I do?
What do we do?


That doesn't mean we're backing off!
You can finish your duel.
Can I trust him!?

let them stifle us...
SHAKE
SHAKE
GRIP
I'm not going to


SILENCE

My princess,
fight to your heart's content!
Stand back!
TOK


I'm in the middle of a duel
for our honor.

How dare she talk to him like that!
He was trying to help her!

She's...
I know.

I want to add something.
す……
DRIP
GRAB
He's moving in!!
If you agree,
I'll accept this duel!
I want that car to escape in.
If I win,

STEP
SLASH
SWISH
SPLAT
SPLAT

KIASHI
I assume it's an intimidation tactic.
How did you know that wasn't poison?
You didn't hesitate.
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
Smells terrible, no?
TWIST
SHIFT
Besides, you wouldn't use poison that could splash onto your employer like that.

This mud is from there
Southern Lodelle is still filled with untamed rain forests
I couldn't get away from the smell of decaying plant matter covered in mud...
I was trained in that hostile environment.
SLURRR
This mud
SHIP
SLUSH
This smell
reminds me of that green hell.

SPLAT
marks my territory!
SWING

Inside my territory,
This room could be full of rioters.

Weeds...
SHEARING
DRIP
DRIP
I can treat them like weeds in the forest.

need to be de-stroyed
with my machete
STEP
LEAP

KI CLANGER

Crap, can she beat him?
STEP
CLANG
CLASH
CLASH

I looked it over.
Yeah
The waiter had the guest list.
Oraldo
did you find anything?

Most of them here are unmarried leftovers and second born or later, to boot.
CLINK
TINK
CLASH
This ball is full of second- and third-tier families.

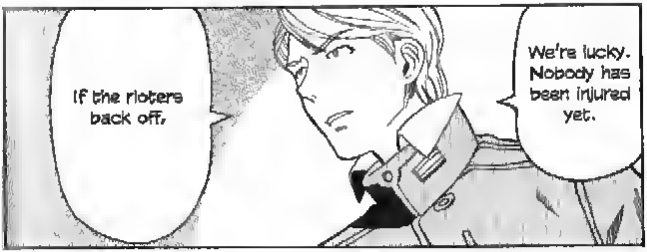
Four people.
The lieu-tenant.
Who are the VIPs?

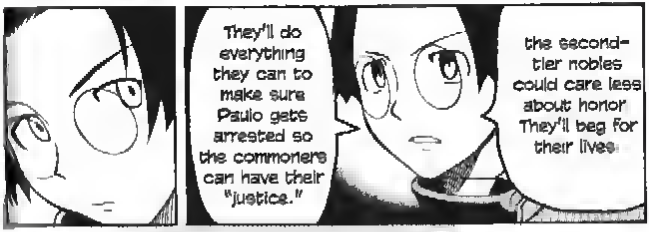
Lord Hoost.

Lord Paulo.

Lionel Taylor.
and that guy,...

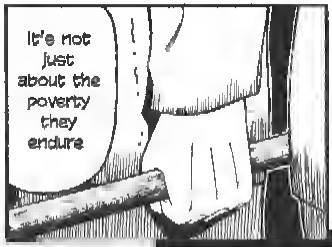
Found them.
That was quick.
Actually, I saw them arguing with the lieutenant earlier.
Sure. Whatever
Lieu-tenant's two older sisters.
Oh, and two more
According to the waiter, one has the
What!? Where?
most luscious breasts
and the other has the perkiest breasts at this ball.


If the rioters back off,
We're lucky. Nobody has been injured yet.


They'll do everything they can to make sure Paulo gets arrested so the commoners can have their "justice."
the second-tier nobles could care less about honor. They'll beg for their lives.

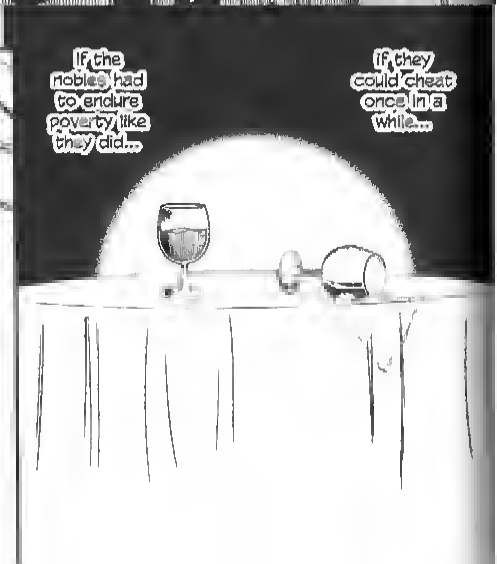
Lionel Taylor's very sharp.
He's stemmed the
Nah, he's clueless.
massacre with words alone...

These men aren't going to lay down their arms
because their lives will be spared or justice will be served!


It's not just about the poverty they endure

It's not just about justice.

What these men hate is


If they could cheat once in a while...
If the nobles had to endure poverty like they did...

the disparity within society.
That's not going to be resolved with a duel.
I told you there's no stopping this.

Don't shut off the engine, Mache
ボリボリ
Things can turn ugly real quick.
CLASH
CLASH
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK

CLANNG!
STORE
He blocked me! again!
UNH
DRR
KCHNK
He only sees it as an obstacle to avoid.
He doesn't see my blade as a deadly weapon.
There's no burden in his breath or mind...
PANT
PANT

If he sees me as another weed...
It's as
.....!!
SHAKE
STOP
It's starting to play tricks on my mind
The slippery sensation underneath my feet... The stench of the mud.

My footing is secure—
I have solid ground underneath my feet.
This is a ball, not the rain forest!
When what you smell isn't what you see...
Confusing, isn't it?
I'm used to it.

My footing is secure!
SAKUSH
SAKUSH
I'm at the ball!
GLANCE
!?
SLASH
SLASH
SLASH

STOMP
JOLT
Dammit
TUG
TUG
My thin blade
won't withstand the heavy blow
of the machine!

SATS
SWING
!
RIPPP

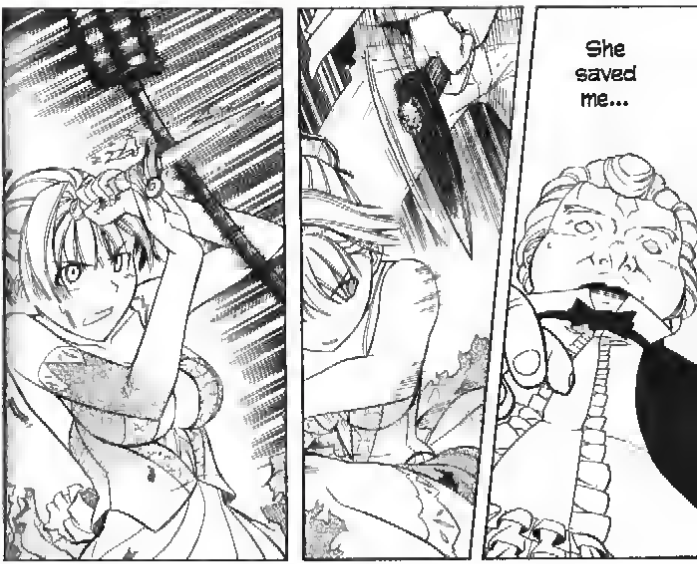
You're not upset?
No. Besides,
STAB
the dress is in the way of
what she needs to accomplish right now.
I know she did that
because she had no choice

Stop! One false move and you'll set off a massacre!
GRAB
Oreido, we—

They're about to—
Crap! I've been paying too much attention to the duel!

WHIP
JOLT

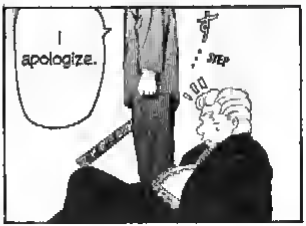
JOLT
No! Don't kill him!
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
Uh
Die, Paulo!
LEAP


She saved me...

I thought she wanted me to fall...!?
SLICE
SWING
Outta my way!
DASH
SWOOSH
How dare you disturb a duel!
GRAB
TWIST

We can't wait around for your stupid game to end!

I was too focused on the duel.
I neglected to protect you

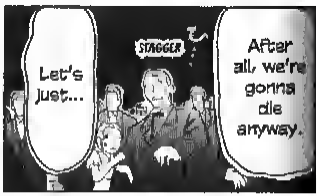

I apologize.
STEP

Even if you win and Paulo's punished...
TWIST
TWIST
Think about it.

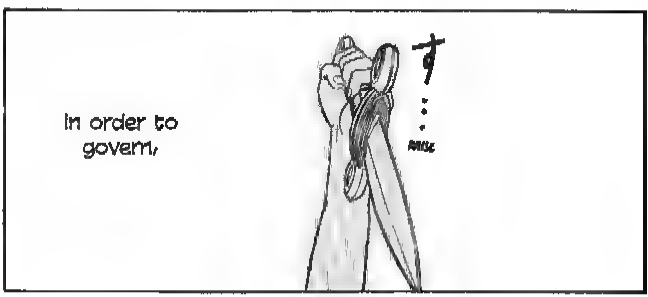
He's gonna be out of jail in no time.
Money talks. Same with power.

MUNDLE
Best to kill everyone right now.
He's right.

A noble


STAGGER
Let's just...
After all, we're gonna die anyway.

At times,
WAVE...
must protect the people against external threats.


In order to govern,
す…
RISE

GUAAAHH
SING
one must fight
sworn to protect.
the people one has
The wench stabbed my hands!

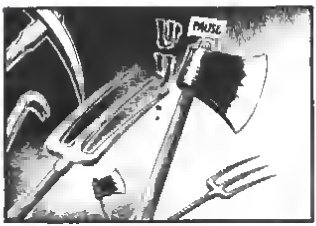
HA HA HA!
Hah!
I was stupid to fall for this!
I knew it! There's no way in hell a noble's gonna take our side.
I'm not siding with anyone.
Trying to have it both ways, eh?
I'll kill you first, woman!

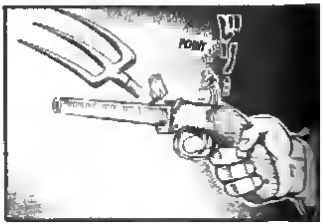
That doesn't mean you can treat us like this.
We're nobles, that's right.
Noblemen also have families
and loved ones!

Do you think being a poor commoner justifies murder!?
How would killing us be justice?
to protect yourselves!!
You're also trying to use your position
what?
SHAKE
SHAKE
Say...
Can you wait a little longer?
PAT
If this place goes to hell, take the lieutenant and get out
I'll find a way—
We're done here
Oreldo :

She's trying so hard.
Could you hold off a little bit?
part of her unit, right?
You're
Huh? Why?
JIT-KCHT
You shouldn't have come here. They're gonna think...
Don't lump me in with violent gangs such as yourself.
I'm the wife of a soldier. I'm prepared for the funerals of both my husband and myself.
You traitor!
Trying to get outta here with that car, eh?

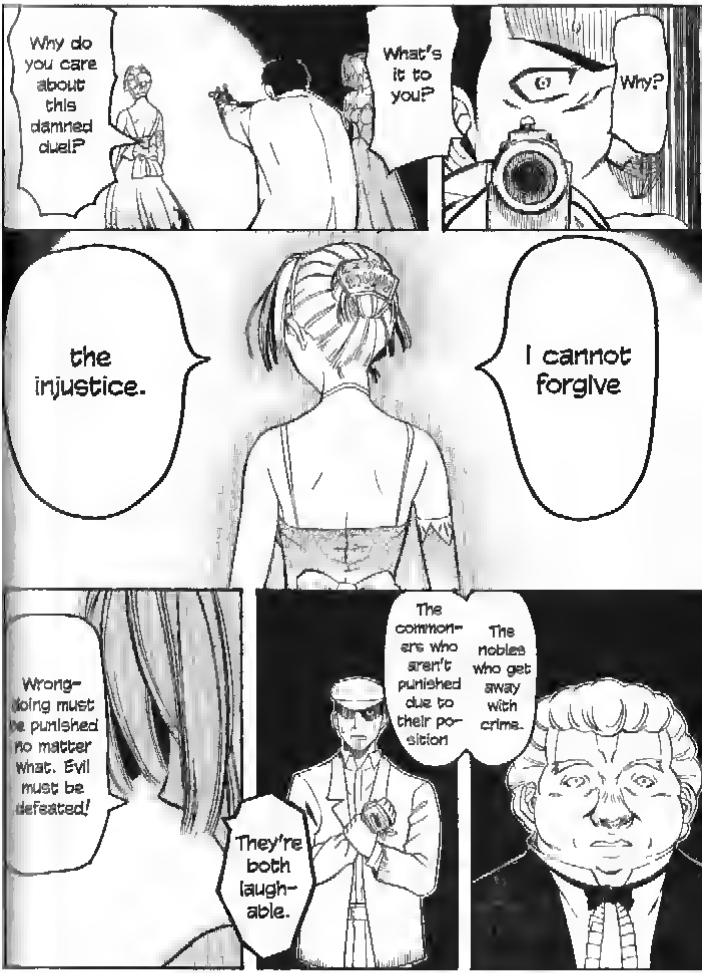
WE YOU.


PAUSE


POINT

Elis, please.
Step aside.

I'm in the middle of
a duel.


Why do you care about this damned duel?
What's it to you?
Why?
I cannot forgive
the injustice.
Wrong-doing must be punished no matter what. Evil must be defeated!
They're both laugh-able.
The common-ers who aren't punished due to their po-sition
The nobles who get away with crime.

I don't care if it's a noble, a commoner,
or the emperor himself!
Did she mention the emperor?
That's treason!!!
I seek.
That's the type of justice
She's one of the
...Wait! That's right!
I don't understand
Why...

nobles
I've been yelling at!!
To be truly fair,
she can't side with anyone.
She can't side with the aristocrats or the commoners.
Not with family or friends.
Not even with people she wants to protect.

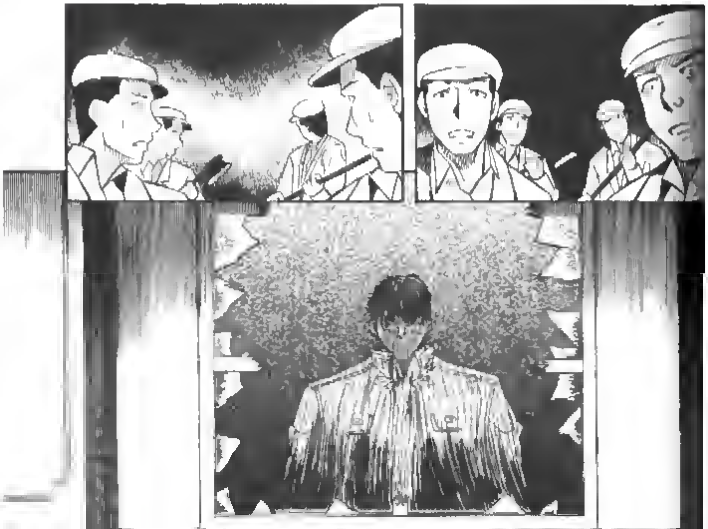
side with her, either.
Nobody should
she must walk an incressingly lonely path.
In order to take her nobility seriously,
Where do soldiers fit in?
You mentioned commoners and nobles.
We believed that this massacre would quench our rage! We bet our lives on it!
We can't take anymore!!
We may not be justified in any way.

KEIJI ASHIHARA
What the—
THUD
ROLL
ROLL

UN... ghhh
Hey! Get up!
What's wrong with you?!

NO...
HHH
ドキッ
DOKI
DOKI

You must not show weakness in public!
You're a Lodelian Guard!



CRUNCH
STEP
JERK
UGH
NNHH
GGHH
GYAAAAAAA
AAA-
AAAAA
AA-
AAA-
AAA
CRUNCH

AAA
AAAA
AAAAHHH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
Stop!
Don't force me to say it.

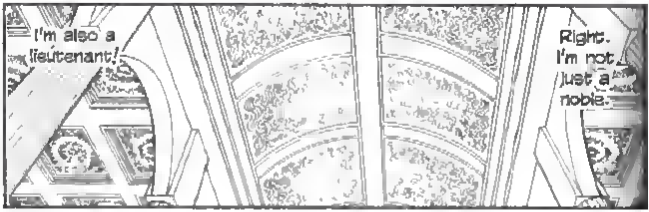
Yet you force yourself and get torn up.
Your heart doesn't want to fight.
Don't come any closer!
The duel is not over!
I don't want to have to tell you this again...

THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
I told you to stand back.
Why did you come?
I'm a noble.
Nobles must stand alone.

Lieutenant...
There are many things I have to do on my own.
I can't do anything about you being an aristocrat.
SNIFF
Right.
Alice Melvin and Randal Chand may have to be alone for the rest of their lives.

I met someone
who wasn't just a noble
or a soldier.
I met the lieutenant of Pumpkin Scissors.
It's my duty to protect you.
After all,
I'm your corporal.

?
Cor
ボソ
Cor...
Corporal?
Yes,
Lieutenant!


I'm also a lieutenant!
Right. I'm not just a noble.

I will do this!
Corporal!
Yes!
I can do this!

Take off your jacket.

Are you upset?
Of course!
Don't wander off!
You're back!

She's getting all jazzed
after ruining that dress of hers!

We must prove that we're not planning to escape!
Mhm.
Mache, shut off the engine!
stop flirting with married women!
Stupid shit!
Mhm.
Oreido, protect Lord Paulo like your life depends on it and
Make sure nobody disturbs this duel.
Corporal, you protect my back.

SHIFT
Yes, Lieutenant
my unit...
I can smell
SNAP
I'm back in my territory now.

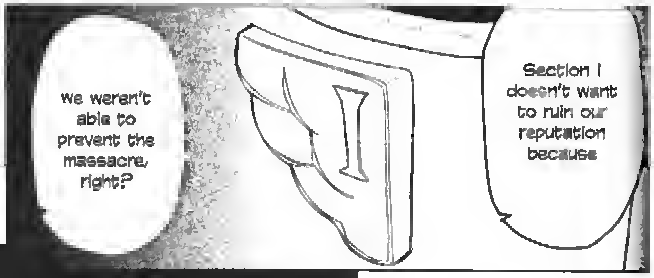
SLAM
What the...
This is now
SLAM
SLAM

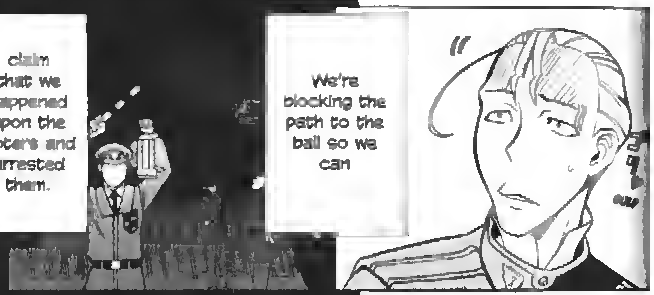
a Pumpkin Scissors operation!

PumpkinScissors

What?
We're not planning a rescue!?
SECT
Two hours ago, we intercepted a man at a train station near the capital.
But there are noblemen under attack, right?
Section I
Double Shotel Marwin Unit
We found out about this plan during the interrogation.
He was trying to deliver this document to the foreign media.

We're too late.
By this time,
dozens of people are probably dead.


Section I doesn't want to ruin our reputation because
We weren't able to prevent the massacre, right?


We're blocking the path to the ball so we can
claim that we happened upon the rioters and arrested them.

such tragedies can be prevented if the government grants us more power
At that point, we can "discover" the massacre and demand that
Uh Captain!
We're in charge of producing external intelligence to support that line of action.
then
If a plan like this hasn't yielded any dead bodies,
There's a possibility
that nobody has been killed yet!

See You Next Time!

Alice is soft!
I would have twisted the blade 90 degrees after stabbing his hand!
(Failed the Review)

Either way, the author's soft, too.
He didn't plan properly, hence I don't make an appearance in this volume!
He didn't do his homework!
I need to twist his arm 90 degrees...
(Failed the Review)

Oh, who am I?

I don't have a name yet!!
(More details in volume 5)